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Central Intelligence Agency



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## DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

10 September 1986

Moscow Propagandizes the UN:  
The Case of the UN International Year of Peace [redacted]

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Summary

Moscow's use of the current UN International Year of Peace (IYP) program is a classic case of exploiting the UN. Its methods include establishing direct management control through a separate secretariat at UN headquarters, maximizing the participation of Soviet fronts, hosting conferences for the program in the USSR, [redacted]

[redacted] While the Soviets have not succeeded in coopting the entire program, they have been able to use numerous IYP events to endorse Soviet arms control policy, spend IYP money on their own conferences and attract Western delegates using the UN facade for events they have sponsored. [redacted]

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We expect Moscow to press ahead on this course for the remainder of the year despite the doubtful prospects for the Copenhagen Conference. For the longer term, we believe the Soviets are sufficiently satisfied with their success that they will use similar methods in future UN commemorative years or other UN programs. Nonetheless, in our view, in exploiting the UN for propaganda purposes, the Soviets face some risks: principally, loss of control of events held at Western sites and vulnerability to publicity that exposes their exploitation.

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This memorandum was prepared by [redacted]  
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Subversion and Instability Center [redacted]

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Background

In 1982, Costa Rica proposed a resolution in the UN General Assembly for the UN system of member states, specialized agencies, and volunteer, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) to plan a program for officially observing an International Year of Peace (IYP). The resolution, as adopted, stipulated that the program should not be funded from the regular UN budget, but from a trust fund established for the occasion. Two pledging conferences have subsequently been held resulting in a nearly \$375,000 budget for the program, according to UN documentation. Last October, the General Assembly declared 1986 to be the IYP year. Over 300 NGOs, including the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs, and the Socialist International, are participating in activities on a calendar of 110 conferences, festivals, special days and media events that is unfolding as the year progresses.

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Soviet Objectives

Since the beginning of the year, Moscow propagandists have shaped several of General Secretary Gorbachev's arms control initiatives to fit the UN IYP. For example, Soviet media have associated his January proposal for a reduction in nuclear weapons inventories of the superpowers by the year 2000 with the IYP. Again, in March, in a message to the UN Secretary General, Gorbachev proposed a five-power conference of the UN Security Council's permanent member states to discuss his plan as a contribution to the IYP. The Soviets also advertised his June message to Perez de Cuellar urging adoption of an international safeguards system to prevent future nuclear accidents like Chernobyl' as an IYP contribution. Soviet identification of these proposals with the IYP, and more broadly with the "peace" issue, is an attempt to gain an appeal and legitimacy for the proposals under the aegis of the UN.

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Moscow's Methods

Soviet approaches to exploiting the IYP program include:

- o controlling the program's management through a separate secretariat reporting to the Soviet Under Secretary General at UN headquarters in New York;

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- o maximizing the participation of Soviet fronts, most of which have NGO status, in the program;
- o hosting "ruble conferences" which recycle Soviet ruble contributions to the IYP trust fund by bringing the UN conferencing facilities to the USSR;



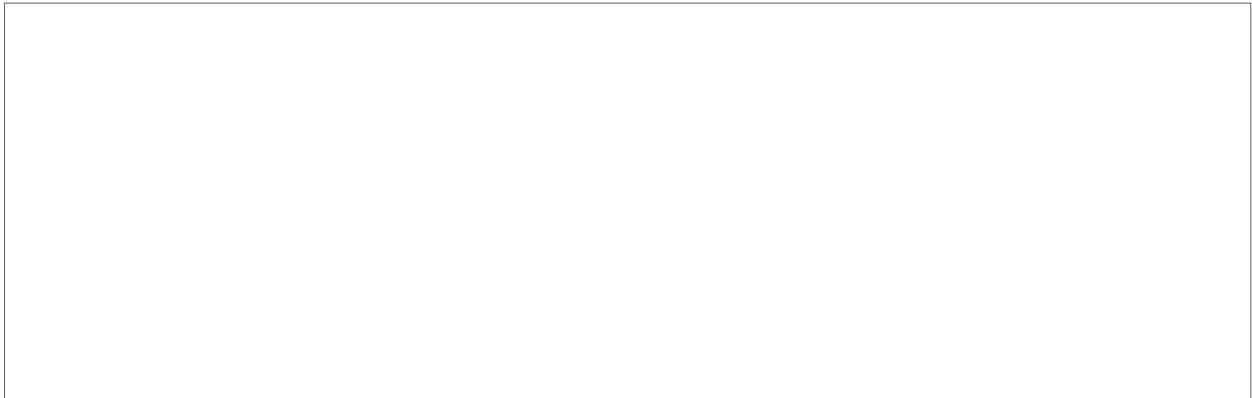
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### The Management Angle


Following adoption of the Costa Rican resolution, the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, which is directed by the Soviet Under Secretary General, Vyacheslav Ustinov, assumed responsibility for the IYP program. Ustinov established a separate IYP secretariat in 1983 composed of 10 people from his Department in New York as well as liaison officers at the UN Information Centers in Europe, Africa, and Asia, according to UN documentation. The documentation also indicates that personnel evaluations for the 10 staff members in Ustinov's office will be influenced by the services they render to the IYP. 

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### Using Soviet Fronts

All the major Soviet fronts, in their NGO capacities, have responded to the IYP Secretariat's call for activities to support the program. Of the 390 NGOs participating, 55 are known or suspected Soviet fronts. One hundred and ten events appear on the IYP calendar, about one-fourth of which are either sponsored by these fronts or being held in Soviet Bloc countries. The Soviet-sponsored World Peace Council's (WPC) "action program" for 1986 indicates that it is giving priority to the IYP and makes a point of stating a need to maintain close contact with Ostrowski's Secretariat. 

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Moscow has succeeded in attracting Western delegates to several Soviet-sponsored events on the IYP calendar. 

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[redacted]

[redacted] The Warsaw Congress of Intellectuals, the International Conference on Conflict Resolution sponsored by a Soviet youth front in Fiji, and the Mediterranean Peace Conference in Athens also attracted Western delegations, according to press reports. In our judgment, Western participation has placed the UN imprimatur on these events and provided Western audiences for promotion of Gorbachev's arms control initiatives. A Western presence probably also provided opportunities for KGB spotting and potential recruitment.

[redacted]

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Soviet NGOs attempted to assume direction of non-Communist IYP activities at the Conference of NGOs in Geneva last January. They pushed hard to convert the steering committee, which they controlled through over-representation of their fronts, into a permanent oversight body for the year. They failed because of opposition from Western NGOs, [redacted]

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[redacted] However, Soviet fronts co-chaired all the workshops and were able to influence the report of the disarmament workshop where they concentrated their people. [redacted]

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#### Financial Ploys

Although 28 Western and Nonaligned member states have pledged money to the IYP trust fund, the USSR and its allies are the largest contributors, principally with soft currencies (Table 1). [redacted] Ustinov and Ostrowski used a fund raising strategy in 1984 of soliciting funds from non-Soviet sources before announcing Soviet Bloc contributions. Presumably, they wanted to avoid the appearance of excessive Soviet interest in the program. Nevertheless, the Bloc has contributed over 72 percent of the trust fund. Since these contributions are primarily in soft currencies, much of the trust fund probably is being spent in the Bloc. [redacted]

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[redacted]

The Soviet ruble account funded the Soviet Peace Committee's hosting a conference for the UN World Disarmament Campaign, listed as an IYP event, in Tbilisi, Soviet Georgia in May. Jan Martenson, a Western UN Under Secretary General, [redacted] [redacted] and Ambassador Ruth, the West

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German Federal Commissioner for Arms Control, attended the conference. [redacted] some Western delegates tried unsuccessfully to restrain the Committee's use of this UN platform to promote Gorbachev's arms control initiatives. [redacted]

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### Prospects

We anticipate that the Soviets will press ahead to coopt as much of the remaining IYP program as possible. While their activities have not been uniformly successful to date, we believe that the Soviets have had enough success to justify their effort. [REDACTED]

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For the longer term, we expect Moscow to use similar methods for future UN commemorative years or other UN programs: separate secretariats where Soviet nationals are well-placed at UN headquarters, heavy participation by Soviet NGOs, hosting UN conferences in the USSR, and sponsorship of events on the official calendar. Ustinov may be able to assist again since his contract does not expire until 1988. [REDACTED]

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### Vulnerabilities

The IYP case indicates that Moscow is vulnerable to publicity about the methods it employs to promote its propaganda through the UN. The Soviets have already been embarrassed by the Danish parties and press in planning for the Copenhagen Congress. We believe that public knowledge of the heavy Soviet Bloc contribution to the IYP trust fund would be embarrassing to them because it indicates that the Bloc has an unwarranted call on the trust fund through soft currency funding. [REDACTED]

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The Soviet manipulation of UN programs also is vulnerable to the opposition of private NGOs, as indicated by the effectiveness of the Western NGOs in Geneva last January. Past history indicates that Moscow is particularly sensitive to Western efforts to organize competing events. Last year, for example, the Soviets, in an effort to discredit the Western-oriented Jamaica Youth Conference, organized a major campaign, which included a disinformation effort of several month's duration and strong criticism from Politburo member Aliyev. [REDACTED]

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The vulnerabilities are likely to persist. Exposure of Soviet sponsorship for the Copenhagen Congress illustrates a dilemma which the Soviets are likely to face again. Control of conferences in the West under the UN label risks exposure as orchestrated events, but lack of control risks criticism of

**Soviet policy. As a result, we believe Moscow will continue to exhibit a penchant for holding well-orchestrated conferences in the Soviet Bloc and inviting Western delegations to those venues.**

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Table 1  
Contributions Pledged to the UN IYP<sup>1</sup>

<u>CONTRIBUTOR</u>	<u>US DOLLARS</u>	<u>CONTRIBUTOR</u>	<u>NON-CONVERTIBLE CURRENCIES (OFFICIAL DOLLAR EQUIVALENTS)</u>
Argentina	1,000	Afghanistan	1,000
Australia	7,000	Bulgaria	51,000
Bangladesh	1,000	Cameroon	3,424
Canada	7,000	Czechoslovakia	28,571
China	10,000	German Democratic Republic	26,666
Costa Rica	2,000	Hungary	20,000
Cyprus	500	Iraq	1,609
Democratic Yemen	2,000	Mongolia	3,000
Egypt	14,215	Panama	1,000
Finland	5,000	Poland	30,000
Greece	3,000	Tunisia	3,000
Indonesia	2,500	Uganda	1,000
India	3,000	USSR	107,100
Maldives	500		
Mali	500		
New Zealand	2,000		
Senegal	1,000		
Sierra Leone	1,000		
Sri Lanka	1,000		
Sweden	12,500		
Tanzania	550		
Thailand	2,000		
Togo	1,000		
USSR	10,000		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90,265</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>277,470</b>

<sup>1</sup>Status on 20 February 1986.

Sources: UN General Assembly document A/Conf. 134/1.3 27 Jan 1986; Tass 14 Feb.86  
UN General Assembly document A/Conf. 134/SR.1 20 Feb 1986.